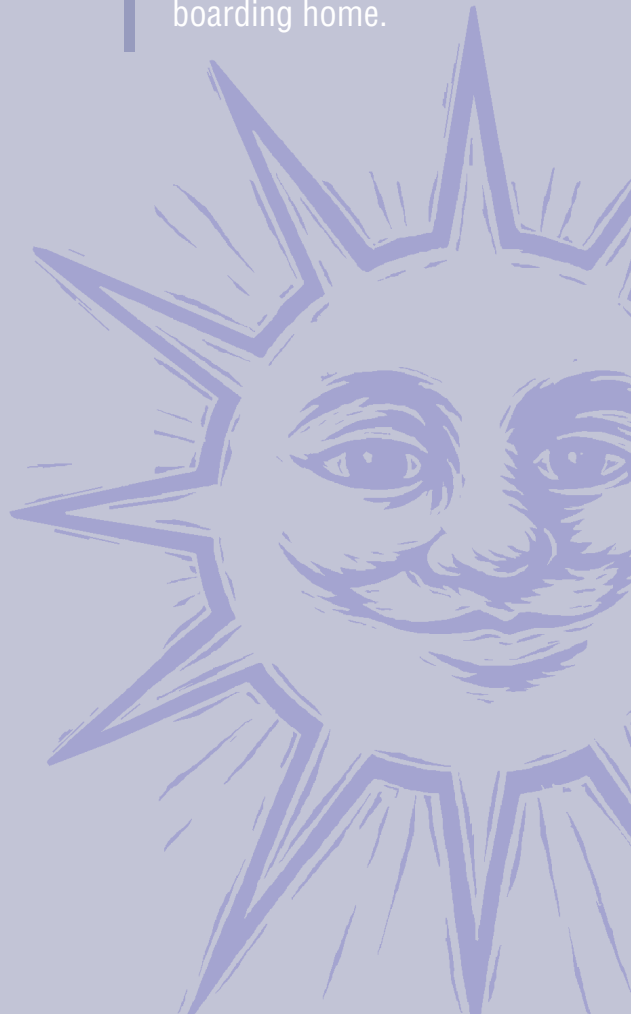


Choosing Care in an Adult Family Home or Boarding Home

Are you looking for long-term care for yourself or another person? This booklet provides a quick reference on how to find and choose an adult family home or boarding home.



AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services



Are you looking for care for yourself or another person? There are many different things for you and your loved ones to talk and sort through, services available, and terms that will be new. This brochure offers some steps to take and questions to ask to **help you get the information you need** to know if an adult family home or boarding home is the right option for you.

Today, more and more people who require additional care are exploring the option of moving to an adult family home or boarding home. For many, these residential care alternatives offer peace of mind that the care they need is available.

An adult family home (AFH) is a regular residential home licensed to care for up to six people. The AFH may be run by a family with children, a single person, or a couple. The AFH may also hire other employees. Some AFHs allow pets. In some homes, multiple languages may be spoken.

A boarding home (BH) is a facility in the community licensed to care for seven or more people. BHs can vary in size and ownership from a family operated 7-bed facility to a 150-bed facility operated by a large national corporation.

All AFHs and BHs provide housing and meals (room and board) and assume general responsibility for the safety and care of the resident. What additional services are offered is different for each home and may include varying levels of assistance with personal care, intermittent nursing care (a nurse available on a part-time basis), and/or assistance with or administering of medications. Some AFHs and BHs also provide specialized care to people living with developmental disabilities, dementia, or mental illness.

This brochure outlines six steps that will help you get the information you need to decide if an adult family home or boarding home is the right choice for you.

**Six steps
to making
long-term care
decisions:**

Step 1:
Talk About Life
Changes

Step 2:
Review Needs

Step 3:
Get the
Information
You Need

Step 4:
Get a List of
Adult Family
Homes and
Boarding Homes

Step 5:
Set up Visits

Step 6:
Make a Decision

Step 1: *Talk About Life Changes*

The first step in making long-term care decisions is for everyone involved to overcome their reluctance to talk about it. Many people put off this conversation because they are uncomfortable or unsure about how to bring it up. The person needing additional care may be reluctant to admit their changing needs. Family members can have differing opinions about what should happen. Miles can separate concerned loved ones.

No matter what the circumstance, fear and discomfort leave everyone unprepared if a crisis occurs. Start talking before an unexpected life crisis teaches you all the things you wished you had known ahead of time.

Tips for Talking About Life Changes

- Set aside time to talk when everyone is rested and prepared.
- The person requiring additional care and support should have a central role in determining what is needed and how it is accomplished.
- Allow each person to talk without interruptions or criticizing.
- Understand emotions are a big part of this discussion. Be **patient** with the amount of time that may be needed to get things out on the table.

The person who will live in the adult family home or boarding home has the last word about the facility; their wishes and preferences are the most important part of this process.

- Remember it normally takes more than one conversation to figure out what to do. Many small steps are better than one huge leap that leaves everyone upset and more confused.
- Allow everyone time to think about everything discussed. If helping a loved one – remember you are making **recommendations** not decisions.

Step 2: *Review Needs*

Carefully consider what care and help you (or your loved one) require. Make a list of medical, physical and social needs.

For example:

- Does someone need to do laundry and cooking?
- Is help needed to get to the bathroom or dressing?
- Are regular medication reminders necessary?



Step 3: *Getting the Information You Need*

Much of the initial information gathering begins on the telephone. There are so many resources available it can be hard to know where to begin. It is helpful to know that it is a time consuming process for everyone. Plan accordingly.

Who to Call

There are local Senior Information and Assistance (I&A) offices throughout Washington State. I&A provides information about local senior services (adults 60 and older) in the community. I&A staff can assist with such things as what services may be available and their cost, names and addresses of local adult family homes and boarding homes, how to fill out forms, and how to find out about what benefits you may have.

I&A is part of your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). To find the I&A or AAA office nearest you, check your telephone directory Yellow Pages under “Senior Citizens Services”. Often, the I&A number is listed under the AAA office. You can get the telephone number and address of local I&A or AAA offices on the internet at www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/resources/clickmap.htm.

If you think you may need state funding (Medicaid) to help pay for services, contact your local Home and Community Services (HCS) office. Call your regional HCS office (listed on back cover) to get the number of your local HCS office.

Eldercare Locator

If you are looking for information and live outside of Washington State, the Eldercare Locator is an excellent resource to connect you with local services.

Call the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116. Full language service for 150 languages is available when you call. Or, visit them on the internet at www.eldercare.gov.

Getting services in your own home

Although this booklet focuses on moving to an adult family home or boarding home, there are many services and resources available



to help an adult get the care needed to continue to live at home. Any of the resources listed under “Who to Call” on page 4 can also talk to you about possible in-home services.

Another DSHS booklet, *Medicaid and Long Term Care Services for Adults* (DSHS 22-619), describes many of the available in-home services. See page 15 for ordering information or look online at <http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/Library/publications/>.

Step 4: *Get a List of Adult Family Homes and Boarding Homes*

There is a wide range of adult family homes and boarding homes in Washington State. To begin finding the home that is a good fit for you (or your loved one), choose the geographic area preferred and get a list of the homes in that vicinity. There are many resources available to help get this list.

Internet

The Washington State Aging and Disability Services website has excellent resources for finding adult family homes and boarding homes in your area. For those people with access to a computer, visit www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov. You can immediately produce a list of all adult family homes and boarding homes sorted by Washington State zip code or county.

Spend time learning about the different services from people experienced with them.

This list provides the phone numbers and addresses of the facilities in the locale requested. It also lists what contract (if any) the facility holds with the State to provide care for state-funded residents.

If you don't have a computer at home, check with your local library for access to one. This search can also be done by anyone – even if they live out of state – with access to the Internet. Give the person doing the search the web address listed above and the Washington State geographic area to be explored.

In addition, I&A, AAA, HCS, and your local ombudsman can also provide a list.

Step 5: Set up Visits

Once there is a list of possible homes, you (or someone you designate) need to visit facilities that match your needs. This point is very important. VISIT as many potential facilities as you can at different times of the day. Although setting up these visits may appear time consuming, in the long run it is worth taking this time to make the best decision. Visiting facilities helps you compare the options available and get a good feel for what is available.

Explore the reputation of each facility you visit. Here are several resources to help you do so.

- Ask a representative from the facility you are visiting to:
 - Show you the last state inspection report. This report will give you insight into any potential problem areas of the home.
 - (Boarding Home only) Give you a copy of the disclosure form that sets out the care and services that it will offer.
 - Provide references or numbers to contact former residents or their family members.
- To find out if there have been complaints lodged against the facility in the past, call the DSHS Field Manager in your area. Field Managers are responsible for inspecting and licensing these facilities. To get the name and telephone number of the Field Manager in your geographic area, call the ADSA HelpLine at 1-800-422-3263.
- Contact the local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program for your area. Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program representatives are advocates for residents of residential care facilities. They work to resolve problems of individual residents and to bring about changes at the local, state and national levels to improve care. They can be an excellent source of information.

To find the office nearest you, call their toll-free number at 1-800-562-6028.



Step 6: Make a Decision

The following checklists will help you ask questions and get information to make your decision. Don't hesitate to ask as many questions as you need to make a choice that works for you. Although there are many questions here, the most important thing to ask is, "Does the adult family home or boarding home meet *my* needs?"



Administration, Costs, and Finances

- ☐ What are the basic rates (it's a good idea to get this information in writing)?
 - ☐ What services are covered by these rates?
 - ☐ Are there charges additional to these rates?
 - ☐ What are the payment policies?
 - ☐ What is the refund policy if someone leaves before the end of a month?
 - ☐ What is the policy for rate increases?
- ☐ How long has the current administration been in place?
- ☐ What is the policy for accepting Medicaid or transferring to Medicaid at a later date?



Staff

- ☐ Is there enough staff available to meet my needs?
- ☐ Is there frequent staff turnover?
- ☐ Is some level of nursing care provided (RN, LPN, Nursing Assistant)? How often is it available?
- ☐ Who will help me with medications if I need it (e.g. reminding me to take them, opening the bottle)?
- ☐ Can someone administer medications to me if I can't take them myself (e.g. applying medication to my skin, putting a pill in my mouth)?
- ☐ Can someone help me if I need special care (e.g. caring for a wound)?
- ☐ What happens if I have an emergency? Can I get help right away?
- ☐ Are staff suitably dressed, personable, and outgoing?
- ☐ Do the staff members treat residents with respect and dignity?
- ☐ Do staff members treat each other in a professional manner?
- ☐ What language does most of the staff speak?



Services and Activities

- ☐ What type of help with personal care is available (e.g. bathing, dressing)?
- ☐ How flexible is the schedule for receiving help with personal care?
- ☐ What, if any, transportation services are available? (e.g. medical appointments, shopping, religious services).
- ☐ Will staff arrange for activities (e.g. hair appointment, concert)?
- ☐ How does the facility support and accommodate personal hobbies?
- ☐ Are there regularly planned activities that I will enjoy?
- ☐ Will I be able to attend religious services of my choice?
- ☐ Can I bring my pet with me when I move?
- ☐ When can I have visitors?



Surroundings

- ☐ As I arrive, do I like the location and outward appearance?
- ☐ Is the facility close to friends and relatives?
- ☐ Is the facility on a noisy street?

- ☐ Are there shops, a library, a park, or other amenities within walking distance?
- ☐ Is the facility close to activities I enjoy?
- ☐ Is the facility on a bus line?
- ☐ Is there an outside area to sit, walk, or garden?



Physical Setting

- ☐ Is the floor plan easy to follow?
- ☐ Are doorways, hallways, and rooms accommodating to wheelchairs and walkers?
- ☐ Are there hand rails to help with walking and in the bathroom?
- ☐ Are cupboards and shelves easy to reach?
- ☐ Are there nonskid floors and firm carpets to assist walking?
- ☐ Does the facility have good natural and artificial lighting?
- ☐ Is the facility clean, free of odors, and well heated and cooled?
- ☐ Does the facility meet my standards of cleanliness?
- ☐ Is the facility free from obvious hazards?
- ☐ Are the facility's rooms clean, safe, and adequate for my needs?
- ☐ Will I have free use of common areas, such as the kitchen, activity rooms, toilet facilities, dining room, or grounds?
- ☐ Can I smoke in my rooms or in common areas?



- ☐ What furniture is provided?
- ☐ Can I bring along some of my furniture or other personal items?
- ☐ Can I regulate the temperature of my room?
- ☐ Is there a sit-down shower?
- ☐ Can I have my own personal phone line or internet connection?
- ☐ Are emergency procedures clearly posted?
- ☐ Am I able to lock my room and/or are there locked areas in each room for personal valuables?



Food

- ☐ Is the food pleasing, nutritious, adequate, and attractively served?
- ☐ What if I don't like what is being served?
- ☐ Can I cook in my room?
- ☐ Are snacks available?
- ☐ Are there specific meal times or are they flexible?
- ☐ Is there a refrigerator available to store my personal food?
- ☐ Will the facility meet my dietary or cultural food preferences?
- ☐ Can I request special foods?



Other Residents

- ☐ Do other residents socialize with each other and appear happy and comfortable?
- ☐ Do residents speak favorably of the facility?
- ☐ Do the residents look like people I want to live with?
- ☐ How are room changes and roommate concerns addressed?
- ☐ Is there a resident group that meets?
- ☐ Do any of the other residents have a history of violent or other problem behaviors? How are these situations handled by staff?



Once a Decision is Made

Planning and information gathering does not stop once you've made your decision to move into an adult family home or boarding home. Moving is a major life change. To help ease the transition, use some of the same steps defined in the first part of this booklet:

1. Talk through the changes that will need to be made.
2. Ask staff at the new residence for help with any questions you have.
3. Get any other additional information you need.
4. Make a plan of what needs to happen and when.

Moving to an adult family home or boarding home can mean letting go of a lifetime of possessions and a familiar way of life. Some people are relieved and look forward to fewer responsibilities while others find it emotional. Either way, the person making the move needs the full support of family and loved ones and should have the central role in determining what happens and when.

Once the move has happened, anticipate a normal period of adjustment. The first few weeks can be the hardest as routines get established and things become more familiar. It is important to discuss any concerns or questions with the adult family home or boarding home operator. **Be sure to ask for what you need.** The staff may be able to make changes that will better meet what works best for you.

As a resident of an adult family home or boarding home, you also have certain consumer rights guaranteed by law. The owner or staff at your new residence should inform you of these rights. If not, ask.

Ordering Publications

You may order this booklet and other DSHS publications through the Department of Printing's (DOP) General Store.

Go to the DOP's website at:

www.prt.wa.gov



Publication requests may also be placed:

- By e-mail at fulfillment@prt.wa.gov
- By phone at (360) 586-6360
- By fax at (360) 586-6361

Make sure to include the name of the publication, publication number (DSHS 22-xxx), and a contact name and street mailing address for orders placed by e-mail, phone, or fax.

To Learn More About ...

caregiving and long-term care topics visit:

www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov



To Find:

- Free brochures and booklets on caregiving and long-term care topics
- Information on the Family Caregiver Support Program.
- Telephone numbers and addresses of local offices working with seniors.
- A list of adult family homes, boarding homes, or nursing homes by county.

We are all partners against adult abuse

Abuse of vulnerable adults (people who need help to care for themselves) can happen anytime, anywhere. DSHS investigates alleged abuse, neglect, exploitation, or abandonment of vulnerable adults.

Call the telephone number listed below for help if you or someone you know is:

- not being cared for properly
- being hurt physically or mentally
- being financially exploited in any way

If you suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult:

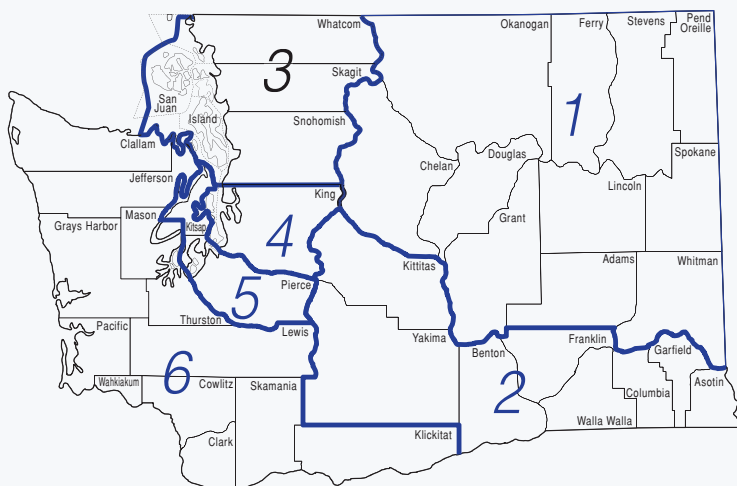
Call DSHS toll-free



It is the policy of the Department of Social and Health Services the people should not be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, age, or disability.

Home and Community Services Regional Phone Numbers

See map to find the region you live in. Call the number listed for your region and ask for your local HCS office nearest you.



Region 1 1-800-459-0421

TTY 509-456-2827

Spokane, Grant, Okanogan, Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Lincoln, Ferry, Stevens, Whitman, and Pend Oreille Counties

Region 2 1-800-822-2097

TTY 509-225-4444

Yakima, Kittitas, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties

Region 3 1-866-608-0836

TTY 360-416-7404

Snohomish, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Whatcom Counties

Region 4 1-800-346-9257

TTY 1-800-833-6384

King County

Region 5

Pierce County 1-800-442-5129

TTY 253-593-5471

Kitsap County 1-800-422-7114

TTY 360-478-4928

Region 6 1-800-462-4957

TTY 1-800-672-7091

Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Skamania, Klickitat, and Clark Counties



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

ADSA Aging & Disability
Services Administration

This booklet and much more information can be found on the Aging and Disability Services Administration website: www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov